

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### **BROOME COUNTY ARTS PROJECTS AWARDED NEA GRANTS**

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today announced that the National Endowment for the Arts has awarded two \$10,000 grants to projects in Broome County. The Broome County Arts Council and the Goodwill Theatre will each receive a \$10,000 Challenge America grant.

"A thriving arts community is a key component of any plan to revitalize an area and improve its quality of life," said Hinchey. "Broome County has made great strides in this regard and has received national attention for its efforts. I'm very pleased that the NEA has chosen these two projects for funding."

The grant to the Broome County Arts Council will assist with the strategic and cultural planning necessary for the updating of the Council's 1993 plan known as Arts Vision. In recent years the Council has focused on developing and enhancing marketing opportunities for the arts, promoting cultural tourism and on defining its role in cultural planning as a tool for the economic development of the greater Binghamton region. This grant will also allow the Council to support developing cultural districts across Broome County.

"These are broad-based issues that impact the arts community and the entire region," said JoAnn Gottsleben, executive director of the Broome County Arts Council. "The Broome County Arts Council is in a unique position to facilitate government, business and the arts working together toward the common goal of reinvigorating our economy."

The Goodwill Theatre will use its grant to evaluate the viability of developing an arts district in downtown Johnson City with the theatre at its center. The plan may include the adaptive reuse of one or more of the nearby defunct factories. The grant will also help to assess the feasibility of establishing a theatre school and a resident theatre company to be associated with the renovated Goodwill Theater, which is scheduled to reopen in 2005.

The Challenge America Program was established by Congress in 2000 to provide greater support for outreach and educational arts projects in underserved communities throughout the United States. A member of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the National Endowment for the Arts, Hinchey has been a strong supporter of the program and of increased NEA funding in general.